Juvenile Detention Reform

Guide for County Officials



Produced by: Community Services Division of the County Services Department February 2007



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Acknowledgements

NACo wishes to thank the following individuals for their time and contributions to the development of this publication:

- Jason Ziedenberg, Executive Director, Justice Policy Institute
- Bart Lubow, Director, Programs for High Risk Youth, Annie E. Casey Foundation
- · Tracey Field, Institute for Human Services Management
- Donald Murray, Senior Legislative Director, National Association of Counties

Special thanks to the counties featured as model programs in this report for submitting information on their programs.

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Introduction to JDAI

s more troubled youth are being placed in juvenile detention centers, many counties are at a crossroads for how to solve the problem of juvenile detention overcrowding. In facing these problems in the past, the solution has been to simply add more detention beds. However, many counties are now taking a major step towards improving local juvenile detention practices by closely examining current practices and searching for proven alternatives.

Research shows that the juvenile crime rate across the country has decreased, yet reliance on secure detention is up. Given these incongruous trends, some counties have taken a deeper look at current juvenile detention practices to evaluate why more youth are being placed in secure facilities.

For the past decade, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and counties around the country have focused on investing in a process called the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). They set out to show that local jurisdictions could establish more effective and efficient systems that could safely reduce reliance on secure detention. The JDAI model has proven to be an effective alternative for counties for four main reasons:

- 1. It is cost-effective
- 2. Improves public safety
- 3. Improves efficiency
- 4. Promotes good administration

The objectives of JDAI

In 1992, the Annie E. Casey Foundation established the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative to address the efficiency and effectiveness of juvenile detention across the United States. JDAI sought to demonstrate that communities could improve

their detention systems without sacrificing public safety.1 The goals of JDAI are to:

- decrease the number of youth unnecessarily or inappropriately detained
- to reduce the number of youth who fail to appear in court or re-offend pending adjudication
- to redirect public funds towards effective juvenile justice processes and public safety strategies

Why consider juvenile detention reform?

It is important for county officials to consider juvenile detention reform for three reasons: current detention practices are costly, detaining children does not promote public safety, and detention affects children negatively. Youth detention rates in the U.S. are rising but the young people who are detained, in large part, do not meet "high risk" criteria of the kind of youth who may need to be detained. 70 percent of youth being held in detention centers are there for nonviolent offenses.² Approximately one third of youth admitted to secure detention will find themselves in facilities that are at, or over their capacity.3

Between 1985 and 2003, the average daily population of detained youth in America more than doubled, while annual operating expenses also more than doubled.4 According to Earl Dunlap, Executive Director of the National Juvenile Detention Association, the cost of operating just one detention bed over a twenty-year period is in the range of \$1.25 to \$1.5 million.5

Counties disproportionately bear the brunt of the costs of the overuse of detention. When young people are unnecessarily detained, counties pay the costs of most of the services they receive while detained,

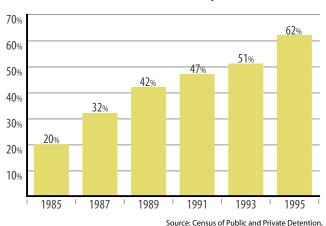
Achieving resultsoriented innovation in your juvenile detention system.

Improve community safety, outcomes for youth at risk, and save county dollars through the Juvenile **Detention Alterna**tives Initiative (JDAI). JDAI is an initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.



and can't always tap into federal or state funding streams which won't cover youth services while they are detained. For example, while mentally ill or drug involved youth are detained, counties often cannot bill Medicaid to pay for those services until youth have left the facility. If these same youth were under community supervision, the county could share the costs with the federal and state government to pay for these services. Rather than turn detention centers into new mental health and drug treatment institutions, JDAI allows counties to quickly figure out how to provide the appropriate supervision, support and, when necessary, public health services to young people in the community.

Percentage of Juveniles in Overcrowded U.S. Public Detention Centers, 1985-1995



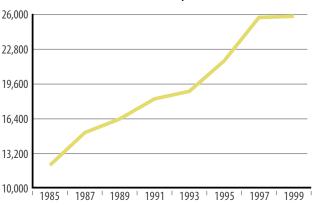
Correctional and Shelter Facilities, 1985-95

If a young person's real need is special education services, it is often cheaper for young people to receive those services in a school or community setting than if those services are provided within the local detention center. This is possible with effective supervision and a well-functioning detention system.

As expensive to operate as they are, detention centers do not ensure the rehabilitation of the young people they hold nor do they always ensure their safety while detained. There is a growing body of research that is demonstrating that lowering juvenile detention populations are commensurate with improved public safety strategies, and increase the likelihood that kids diverted from secure detention to community alternatives will have a much greater chance of avoiding adult criminal behavior.

Research by the Oregon Social Learning Center has shown that when youth are congregated together for treatment, they are more likely to have worse short term behavior and fare worse as adults in their employment, family stability, and interpersonal relationships than youth treated individually.⁷ A study of youth in Arkansas showed that prior incarceration was the strongest predictor of future incarceration (higher than gang membership or an arrest for carrying a weapon).⁸

Average Daily Population of Juveniles in Detention Centers, 1985-1999



Source: Detention data adapted from Sickmund, M. (forthcoming). Juveniles in Corrections. Washington, DC OJJDP, 1985-99

In contrast to the impact the overuse of detention has on young people, the communities that reduced detention populations experience the same or greater crime drop than that experienced in the rest of the United States. There have been many examples of counties utilizing alternatives to the detention of young people producing better results for less cost.

Detention Reform Coincides with Crime Declines, and Failure to Appear Rates Fall.

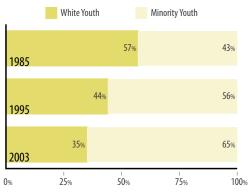
County	Violent Juvenile Arrest Rate (1996-2002)	Failure to	o Appear 2003
Cook	-54%	39%	13% (-66.7%)
Multnomah	-45%	7%	7%
Santa Cruz	-38%	n/a	3%
United States Average	-37%	n/a	n/a

Source: Uniform Crime Report, Crime in the United States Survey (1996; 2002); Cook County, Multnomah and Santa Cruz Probation Departments.

What is JDAI?

JDAI is a process, not a conventional program, whose goal is to make sure that locked detention is used only when necessary. In pursuing that goal, JDAI restructures the surrounding systems to create improvements that reach far beyond detention alone.

Youth in Detention by Race/Ethnicity 1985-2003



Source: Detention data adapted from Sickmund, M. (forthcoming). Juveniles in Corrections. Washington, DC OJJDP, 1985-99

JDAI's primary target is youth who are in detention or at-risk to be detained in the future. Each year, more than 2 million arrests9 are made of youth and subsequently approximately 300,000 to 600,000 admissions to secure detention.¹⁰ Of these children detained, two thirds are racial or ethnic minorities arrested at rates that are out of proportion to the rate of their unlawful behavior. Roughly a quarter of children detained are acutely mentally ill.¹¹ Eighty percent of girls detained report physical abuse and 50 percent report sexual abuse.¹² JDAI's vision is to handle these children differently; appropriately.

The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) has demonstrated that jurisdictions can safely reduce the number of youth it detains through a set of interrelated strategies that include the use of sound, relevant data to aid in making detention decisions; through collaboration among juvenile justice agencies, community organizations and other government agencies; by developing objective instruments to guide detention decisions; by creating a meaningful array of non-secure alternatives to detention; and by making case processing more efficient to reduce time between arrest and case disposition. By systematically addressing each of these areas, JDAI has proven that juvenile detention rates can be dramatically reduced without a corresponding increase in juvenile crime.

JDAI achieves these goals through eight core strategies:

- 1. Intergovernmental collaboration
- 2. Making data-driven decisions
- 3. Using objective risk assessment instruments
- 4. Developing new detention alternatives
- 5. Expediting the flow of cases through the system
- 6. Reducing racial disparities through specific strategies aimed at eliminating
- 7. Improving conditions of confinement
- 8. Handling "special" cases—technical probation violations, warrants, and youth pending placement— in new and innovative ways

In it's more than 10 years in existence, JDAI has demonstrated results in urban and rural locales, saved millions of dollars, and improved the lives of thousands of young people.13



JDAI is being implemented in more than 75 jurisdictions in 19 states and the District of Columbia. The states where JDAI is active house approximately 49% of all detained youth in the country. If expansion continues consistent with the expressed interest of the system officials we have been in contact with, by the end of 2006, juvenile detention reform will be on the agenda in at least 27 states and the District of Co**lumbia** accounting for just about three quarters of all the detained youth in the country. In many of these jurisdictions county officials are key leaders in the juvenile detention reform movement. We understand the critical role they play in advancing the juvenile detention reform movement.

> - Bart Lubow, **Director of Programs** for High Risk Youth, Annie E. Casey Foundation

What does this mean for county policy makers?

The unique role of county government in this process – as the primary provider at the local level in health, social services, juvenile corrections – provides the organizational framework for construction of a comprehensive strategy to provide for community protection, offender accountability to victims, and the supports and services necessary to positively change offender behavior. Programs and services must seek to combine early problem identification with appropriate and timely interventions.



By conducting a deeper analysis of your overall detention system and determining which youth are being placed in secure detention and why, the information gained from this pursuit may reveal gaps or arbitrary procedures that contribute to the inefficiencies and high costs associated with running detention systems. Moreover, it may turn out that many of the youth placed in the system have mental health needs that may be best met elsewhere, or are simply awaiting placement in a shelter care or other residentially-based community program.

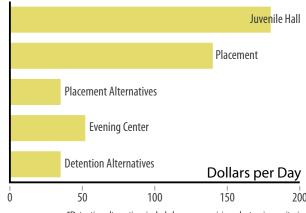
Many counties will find that placement in detention may be unrelated to the public safety risks youth pose. In a lot of cases, availability could be driving the use of secure detention for some youth. In some cases, there are youth in detention who can be supervised in the community, at significant cost savings to counties. It takes the knowledge and political will of county policy makers to implement the appropriate reforms in the juvenile detention system to make it more efficient, improve the conditions in existing facilities, eliminate the inappropriate use of secure detention and make their communities safer as a result.

How much do counties need to invest in juvenile detention?

JDAI does not have its own budget. Its goal is to shift the policies and practices of the agencies primarily responsible for the youth, therefore re-allocating existing resources rather than providing new funds. The cost effective cost shifting that occurred in Cook County, Illinois is a particularly good example.

At the time that JDAI was introduced to officials in Cook County, the county board authorized the construction of 200 new secure detention beds in response to chronic overcrowding at their facility. The cost to build, finance and operate a detention bed over a twentyyear period is \$ 1.5 million. This means that the county government was committing itself to approximately \$300 million in additional detention expenditures over the next two decades. In Cook County, JDAI's successful population reduction strategies, particularly the continuum of alternatives to detention programming, made this construction unnecessary. Instead, Cook County allocates approximately \$3 million per year in program funding that was not part of the budget prior to JDAI. Over twenty years, those programs will cost about \$60 million to operate. The net savings to the county from successful detention reform, therefore, is almost one-quarter of a billion dollars.14

Cost Effective Alternatives: Juvenile Justice Interventions General Fund Cost Per Child



*Detention alternatives include home supervision, electronic monitoring and advocacy and recreation services through a community based agency.

Source: Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) A National and Local Perspective, Santa Cruz County presentation, 2006.

Three model county programs:

Bernalillo County, New Mexico

"If you build it, they will fill it," says Bernalillo County's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) Coordinator Doug Mitchell. According to Mitchell, you can't keep building facilities, it's too expensive. "Moreover, the wrong kids end up in detention. Juvenile detention centers," Mitchell says, "have become the primary default mental health provider in Bernalillo County and around the country."

"The delinguency system is like quicksand. Once kids get in they can't get out," said Judge Marie Baca of Bernalillo's Children's Court. For Baca, detention reform is about making sure that the kids who are released have access to and are enrolled in services. From 1994 to 1996, Bernalillo County added 27-bed units to its juvenile detention facility, as its juvenile population steadily increased. In 1998, the county was facing a 50 percent to 65 percent staff turnover rate, unsafe conditions and a high special needs population in the facility. At that point, the county began evaluating costs for additional expansion and decided it was time to examine other options.

This led them to discussions with the Annie E. Casey Foundation and in 2000, the county joined on as a site for the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative. County leaders concluded that they needed significant detention and systems reform, and that all stakeholders needed to be part of that process. The Bernalillo County Commissioners were critical partners in initiating JDAI. The commissioners allowed the juvenile detention administrators to reallocate existing resources to undertake JDAI reforms and not to cut the budget. "The commissioners left our budget alone and they agreed to raise staff salaries to reduce the high turnover rate. Currently our turnover rate

is 10 percent. The commissioners stuck by our side and we needed their support. They invested in us and gave us the flexibility to move in a direction we wanted and our job was not to embarrass them in the end," said Tom Swisstack, director of the Bernalillo County Juvenile Detention Center.

Bernalillo County has also focused on how to improve decision-making regarding detention policies by using solid data. They found that youth were being booked, and probation officers were bringing them to detention only to then be immediately released. "Kids are often brought to detention because they upset an adult, but they are not a threat to public safety," said Mitchell. Since implementing the JDAI model in 2000, Bernalillo County has reduced its detention population from over 110 youth to approximately 50 youth detained, on average, in 2005.

Bernalillo County has developed several key alternatives to detention with no additional staff. One of the more unique alternatives in Bernalillo's program is a children's community mental health center, which was established in 2001 and is located on the juvenile detention center campus. The children's mental health center originated as a collaborative effort with the county juvenile detention center, medical assistance division, and Medicaid managed care organizations.

Detention administrators saw the need for community-based behavioral health services to prevent children with mental health needs from ending up in the detention facility simply because there was no other place to get services. Their facility is the only licensed children's community mental health center in the state of New Mexico. The center was funded with an initial investment from Bernalillo County and from the local Medicaid managed care organization, and it receives

Bernalillo's JDAI
Coordinator, Doug
Mitchell, comments
on his county's experience adopting the
JDAI model, "At the
beginning, I asked
how can we do this
with what we have
given existing resources? We've proven that you do not
need large grants to
start JDAI."

"Since Multnomah County implemented JDAI, the positive outcomes keep showing up even when we don't expect them. By implementing JDAI system improvement strategies, we are saving tax dollars and leveraging our existing dollars with "best practice" programs. As a result, Joanne Fuller, who oversees our county's juvenile detention services, has made Multnomah County a national leader in developing accountability and early intervention programs contributing to a reduction in recidivism and minority over-representation, and has increased high school completion rates throughout the county. The positive impacts of JDAI have been far-reaching."

-Multnomah County Commissioner & Vice Chair, NACo's Justice and Public Safety Steering Committee, Lisa Naito ongoing funding from billing Medicaid for services. The center provides a bridge or continuum of services for the highest-need children. It is able to attract high quality therapists and therapeutic services in exchange for taking care of their administrative needs, such as billing.

Bernalillo County has established a Community Custody Program (CCP) and a Youth Reporting Center (YRC) as some of the other alternatives to detention programs. It costs approximately \$26 per day to keep a child in a detention alternative program compared with \$189 per day to detain a child in secure detention. The county has reallocated staff from the Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) to serve as supervisors in the Youth Reporting Center program. The Probation Department also has discretion to refer children to this program if they have a technical violation instead of sending them to secure detention.

Using financial measures alone, looking for alternatives to locking up juveniles pays big dividends. If the county would have added the two units it was considering in 1998 to its existing JDC, it would have been at a cost of \$2 million, with an annual operating expense of \$782,000. Currently, the annual operating cost for detention alternatives program is \$224,000.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation has recently named the Bernalillo County Juvenile Detention Center a national model site for detention and systems reform.

Multnomah County, Oregon

Multnomah County became a JDAI site after a study revealed that the only secure juvenile detention facility was constantly at capacity, and would have exceeded capacity if the county did not have a court-mandated cap. The county also noticed a disproportionate number of ethnic and racial minorities being held in secure detention, also referred to as Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC). Before Multnomah County adopted the JDAI program in 1994, youth of color represented 73 percent of the youth in detention throughout the county.¹⁵

Three units, totaling 48 beds, were closed and the county saw their savings increase as they detained fewer young people. Multiple efforts were employed to reach lower detention rates. One of these efforts culminated in opening a new detention facility and the staff decreased the use of lock-in punishments for disruptive youth. Multnomah

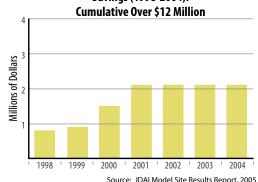
Multnomah County Results with JDAI

Result	Pre-JDAI	2004
Total Annual Admissions	2,915 Youth	548 Youth
Average Daily Population	96 Youth per day	21 Youth per day
Average Length of Stay	7.5 Days	7.5 Days
Average Case Processing Time	160 Days	92 Days
Percent Youth of Color in Detention	73%	50%
Number Youth of Color in Detention	70 Youth	11 Youth
Juvenile Crime Referrals	5,391 Youth	3,989 Youth
Failure to Appear (FTA) Rate (Detention Alternatives 2004)	***	14%
Recidivism (Detention Alternatives 2004) Based on Average Daily Population	***	13%

Source: Uniform Crime Report, Crime in the United States Survey (1996; 2002); Cook County, Multnomah and Santa Cruz Probation Departments. County adopted the JDAI model and determined that they would make the distinction between "high-risk youth" and "high-need youth". They decided highrisk youth needed to be placed in secure detention, but high-need youth, or youth that were arrested for status offenses and low-level misdemeanors, were not to be detained.16

In their effort to reduce the unnecessary use of detention for youth and, at the same time, improve their case processing through the court system, Multnomah County instituted a process called Pretrial Placement Planning. Through this system the arresting police officers complete their report the day of the crime and the following morning representatives from probation, prosecution and defense discuss the risks posed by the individual detained for delinguent acts. They then hold a detention hearing in which the Department of Community Justice makes a recommendation to the court for secure detention, more secure supervision through a detention alternative program or for outright release to a parent or guardian. By 3:30pm of that day the alleged delinquent is on his or her way to the appropriate pretrial placement within 48 hours of their arrest.¹⁷ This improvement in the efficiency of case processing has helped reduce the amount of time juveniles are held in secure detention, thus reducing overall detention populations, as well as aiding youth in pretrial that will not be detained in promptly receiving the proper supervision.

> **Cost Savings in Multnomah County** Savings (1998-2004):



In the city of Portland, hosted by the Central Police Precinct, the Youth Reception Center was established to intercept children arrested and identify their needs (food, clothing, medical care, etc.) and within a day a case-manager is assigned to link the child to the appropriate services in the community.¹⁸ The Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week so that homeless youth and runaways that may have ended up held in detention centers or put back on the street to be arrested again could be provided an alternative to detention. The Youth Reception Center's project coordinator Rick Jensen comments, "Kids are triaged so their immediate needs such as shelter, food, medical attention and clothing are arranged. Then the following day or so, the youth is provided a case manager to get the kid back home and back into school or treatment."19

Multnomah County was also able to make some progress in reducing the racial disparity in their juvenile detention system through becoming a JDAI site. Through the development of interagency collaboration on objective screening measures, Multnomah County was able to bring the rate of racial and ethnic minorities in juvenile detention from 73 percent in 1994 to 50 percent in 2003.20 The county also saw the number of detention admissions per year fall from 2,915 to 348 in this same period, a decline of 88 percent. The decline in the population of juveniles in detention has saved the county more than \$2 million annually that they have redeployed towards new community alternatives to detention.²¹

Santa Cruz County, **California**

The Santa Cruz County Probation Department realized that the JDAI process could assist in decreasing the number of youth detained who may have special needs and are disproportionately African Americans and Latinos. Santa Cruz County conducted a study of its Juvenile Hall, and found that a facility designed to hold 42 young people often detained up to 60 youth, in poor conditions of confinement. The county's Board of Supervisors provided leadership in instituting reforms to the juvenile detention system and community stakeholders got involved to aid in the process.

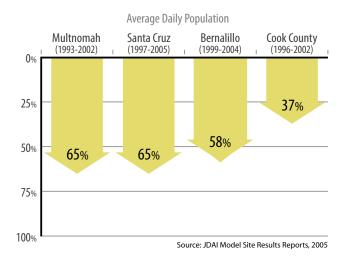
"We were facing serious overcrowding in our juvenile detention center. We were looking at 60+ youth daily in a 42 capacity juvenile facility with poor conditions of confinement. Our County Board of Supervisors provided the leadership needed to adopt JDAI in our community. JDAI gave us the opportunity to reduce unnecessary confinement and institutionalization among our youth. The results over the past 10 years have been incredible. Since implementing JDAI, our average daily detention population has decreased by 54% and juvenile felony arrests are down by 41%. I would urge other counties to consider JDAI for their own communities. With over 60 jurisdictions across the country now at some stage of JDAI implementation, it's a movement well worth being a part of."

> -Santa Cruz County Supervisor, Mardi Wormhoudt

Once the reforms took effect, Santa Cruz experienced a significant drop in their costs. A day of juvenile detention costs approximately \$184 compared to a day at a day-reporting center that includes wrap-around services for youth that costs only \$65. Their reform efforts cut the detained population nearly in half, which saved the county close to a million dollars annually. Santa Cruz County developed a series of community-based alternatives so that law enforcement, the courts and other systems actors had some options to choose from.²² The types of programs developed involved community-based organizations and were culturally and linguistically competent. They include training programs based on the youth's strengths, crisis response, wrap-around services and tracking/supervision.

The reforms Santa Cruz County made significantly reduced the juvenile detention population, reduced the level of racial disparities and led to improvements in public safety measures. From 1996 to 2005, the average daily population of juveniles held in secure detention fell 54 percent. In this period of time juvenile felony arrests were almost cut in half.

Detention Population Reductions at JDAI Model Sites



Resources

- Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) To demonstrate that jurisdictions can establish more effective and efficient systems to accomplish the purposes of juvenile detention, the Foundation established the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in 1992. The objectives of JDAI are to reduce the number of children unnecessarily or inappropriately detained; to minimize the number of youth who fail to appear in court or reoffend pending adjudication; to redirect public funds toward successful reform strategies; and to improve conditions of confinement. www.aecf.org/initiatives/jdai
- JDAI Help Desk The new on-line clearing house for information on the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), improving juvenile justice and strengthening communities. The Help Desk is an electronic library featuring juvenile justice data & policy analyses, descriptions of best practices, examples of reform tools as well as individualized assistance to help in planning for effective change. www.jdaihelpdesk.org
- National Association of Counties (NACo) Health and Criminal Justice Programs - provides technical assistance to counties through a mix of educational programming on issues ranging from the methamphetamine epidemic, access to health care, adults and juveniles with mental health/substance abuse needs coming into contact with local criminal justice systems, and juvenile detention reform. Through these grant supported projects, NACo helps counties find solutions to safely and effectively expand access to health care, respond to methamphetamine abuse, divert individuals with mental illness from county jails, to better transition offenders exiting jail with co-occurring disorders to community-based mental health treatment and to better create community alternatives to unnecessary juvenile detention. To carry out these program activities, NACo is supported by grants from Eli Lilly and Company, U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

To order resources and materials from the Annie E. Casey Foundation specifically on JDAI, please contact Justin Carmody, Community Services Division Assistant at (202) 942-4279 or *jcarmody@naco.org*.

For more information on NACo's criminal justice program, please contact Lesley Buchan at (202) 942-4261, *lbuchan@naco.org* or visit www.naco.org/techassistance and click on "Criminal Justice".

- •Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) The Coalition for Juvenile Justice serves as a national resource on delinquency prevention and juvenile justice issues. Nationwide, more than 1,500 CJJ volunteers from the public and private sectors—professionals, concerned citizens, and advocates for children and families, and youth themselves—participate as members of state advisory groups on juvenile justice. www.juvjustice.org/initiatives/atd.html
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) OJJDP, a component of the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, accomplishes its mission by supporting states, local communities, and tribal jurisdictions in their efforts to develop and implement effective programs for juveniles. The Office also strives to enable the juvenile justice system to better protect public safety, hold offenders accountable, and provide services tailored to the needs of youth and their families. http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org

Endnotes

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In regards to the estimate of the number of youth moving through detention each year: the most recent data available from surveys administered by the National Council on Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) estimate that 350,000 youth were detained in 1999 (OJJDP, 2001b). This figure, however, does not include youth detained while they are awaiting a court-ordered out-of-home placement. Further, according to Dr. Barry Krisberg estimates the figure to be closer to 500,000: "The NCJJ data covers court hearings for detention – many youths come into detention via law enforcement agencies, schools, parents, social service agencies etc, and are released before a court hearing is held – this might also include probation and parole violators in some jurisdictions." Personal Communications, July 15, 2003.

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- ¹⁴ Krisberg, Barry and Lubow, Bart. Assessing the Outcomes of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative. (Forthcoming). Oakland, California: National Center on Crime and Delinquency.
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- ¹⁷ Rust, Bill. "Juvenile Jailhouse Rocked." AdvoCasey, Fall/Winter 1999.
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- ²¹ Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2005). Foundation Investment Summary 2005 Budget Year: Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative.
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